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DOCTORAL STUDIES: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
PhD, Economics, Expected completion June 2008
DISSERTATION: "Essays on Matching, Marriage and Human Capital Accumulation"

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND REFERENCES

Professor Esther Duflo
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PRIOR EDUCATION Masters of Arts Economics University of Toronto 2003
Bachelor's of Arts Economics McGill University 2002

CITIZENSHIP Canadian **GENDER:** Female **DATE OF BIRTH:** 1980

LANGUAGES French (mother tongue), English (fluent), Spanish (intermediate)

RESEARCH & TEACHING FIELDS Primary Fields: Labor Economics
Secondary Fields: Development Economics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE	Teaching Assistant, Graduate Development Economics: Micro Issues (14.771), Prof. Esther Duflo, Abhijit Banerjee and Sendhil Mulhainathan, MIT and Harvard University	Fall 2007 Fall 2006
	Teaching Assistant, JPAL Executive Class on Randomized Trials	June 2007
	Lecturer, "Designing and Conducting Small Scale Surveys", World Bank International Program for Development Evaluation Training, Carleton University	June 2005
	Teaching Assistant, Principles of Economics for Non-Specialists (ECO105Y), Prof. Michael J. Hare, University of Toronto	Fall 2002- Spring 2003
RELEVANT POSITIONS	Research Assistant to Prof. Esther Dulfo	2005
	Research Assistant to Prof. David Autor	2006
	Economist, Economic Studies and Policy Analysis Division Ministry of Finance, Government of Canada, Ottawa, Canada	2003-2004
FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS	MIT Graduate Fellowship 2004-2006	
	MIT Ida Green Fellowship for most promising female graduate students 2004-2005	
	Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada Doctoral Scholarship 2004-2008	
	University of Toronto Fellowship 2002-2003 McGill Greville-Smith Scholarship 1999-2002	
PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES	Referee for <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> , <i>American Economic Journal: Microeconomics</i> , <i>Review of Economic and Statistics</i> , <i>Journal of Development Economics</i> , <i>Economic Journal</i> .	
	"What Fathers Do? From Polygamy to Monogamy" (with Aloysius Siow, University of Toronto) presented at "The Evolution of Preferences", UC Davis, April 4-5 2003	
	"Demographic Shifts and Aggregate Productivity Growth: The Effect of Changing Consumption Patterns" presented at the Canadian Economic Association Meetings, June 4-6, 2004	
RESEARCH PAPERS:	"Making Yourself Attractive: Pre-Marital Investments and The Returns to Education in the Marriage Market" (Job Market Paper) While several studies examine the effect of marriage market conditions on post-marital labor supply, few account for the effect of these conditions on pre-marital investment decisions and mate selection. This paper investigates theoretically and empirically how changes in marriage market conditions affect pre-marital investments. I first show how a change in the sex ratio -- that is, the ratio of males to females -- can alter incentives for investments both in the context of a unitary model of the household and in a non-unitary setting with post-match bargaining. The model predicts that a rise in the sex ratio will lead men to increase pre-matching investments and women to decrease them if agents are sufficiently risk averse. I test this prediction using exogenous variation in the marriage market sex ratio, brought about by immigration, exploiting the preference of second generation Americans for endogamous matches. I find that a worsening of marriage market conditions spurs higher pre-marital investments, measured by years of education, literacy and occupational choice. Specifically, a change in the sex ratio from one to two leads men to increase their educational investment by 0.5 years on average and women to decrease it by (an insignificant) 0.05 years. In addition, the sex ratio significantly affect post-marital labor supply through pre-marital investments suggesting that accounting for these effects when using marriage market conditions as proxies for ex-post bargaining power is important. Overall, the results suggest that there are	

substantial returns to education in the marriage market, and that both men and women take these returns into account when making education decisions.

“Marry for What? Mate Selection in Modern India” (with Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Maitreesh Ghatak)

This paper studies the role played by caste, education, and other attributes in arranged marriages among middle class Indians. We interviewed a sample of parents of prospective grooms and brides who placed matrimonial ads in a popular Bengali newspaper. We collected information about the number of responses that they received to the ad as well as the details of a subset of these responses, how they ranked these responses, whether they replied and their ranking of other ads in the newspaper. A year later, we surveyed them a second time and learned about the ultimate outcome of their search: whether their child was married, and with whom. We use the first interview data to infer the preferences for castes, education, beauty, and other attributes. We then compute a set of stable matches, which we compare to the actual matches observed. Stable matches look similar to the actual matches, suggesting a relatively frictionless marriage market. One of the key empirical findings of this study is that there is a very strong preference for in-caste marriage. For example, parents are ready to marry their child to someone with many fewer years of education if that person is from their own caste. However, because this preference is shared by both sides of the markets, and because the groups are fairly homogenous in terms of other attributes, in equilibrium, the cost of insisting on marrying within one's caste is small. This allows “caste endogamy” to remain a persistent feature of the Indian marriage market.

**RESEARCH IN
PROGRESS:**

“Too Young, Too Soon? Timing, Matching and Outcomes in the U.S. Marriage Market”

While early marriages are correlated with poor economic and marital outcomes, little is known about the causal effect of age at marriage on matching outcomes. This paper investigates the impact of the age at first marriage on human capital accumulation decisions and matching patterns using changes in state-level legal age at marriage over the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, it measures whether delaying a union may decrease the capacity of spouses to coordinate their human capital investments. These legislative restrictions on the minimum legal age at marriage appear to have been effective at modifying the age at first marriage. The results suggest that marrying later increases educational attainment of males and females. In accordance with Becker (1973) and Keeley (1997) model of household specialization, the results also indicate that marrying later leads to less specialization within the household. Men who marry at a later age marry more educated females, females with higher labor force attachment and who earn higher wages while they themselves work less. Furthermore, delayed marriages also translate in better children outcomes.

“Not Yet Married but Already Paying the Price: The Consequences of Granting Spousal Benefits to Cohabiting Partners”

Since the early 1970s, Canadian provinces have granted the same alimony rights that are given to married individuals to spouses in a cohabiting relationship. This paper estimates the effect of such a right on spousal labor supply. The timing of these laws and the required duration of the cohabitation varied by geographical entity which provides sources of variation for the estimation. I find that relationships are more likely to last longer once such rights are given. Furthermore, female labor supply is reduced after spousal support rights have been granted. This holds even across time for a given relationship. No such effect can be found on married individuals, for whom the law had no impact. I also highlight the importance of endogenous

relationship formations: in relationships formed after the change was legislated, the effect of obtaining these rights was much less marked than for couples whose relationship was formed before the law was imposed.

PUBLICATION: “Demographic Shifts and Aggregate Productivity Growth: The Effect of Changing Consumption Patterns”, Department of Finance Working Paper Series, 2005-01, ([online](#)).